any special scheme to encourage these organisations; and

(c) whether any registration is required with defence officials in this regard, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR):

(a) to (c): Unit Run Canteens (URCs) are retail outlets for the sale of consumer products (mainly articles for daily household requirements) to Defence personnel, ex-Servicemen and other specially authorised categories, at prices lower than the prevailing market prices.

the U.R.C.'s are owned and controlled by the Units themselves, and run under their private Regimental arrangements. The U.R.C's do not deal in any defence materials.

The U.R.C's make their purchases from the Canteen Stores Department (C.S.D.), under the Ministry of Defence, which, in turn, makes bulk purchases from manufacturers and wholesellers, to service the U.R.Cs. In making its purchases, the C.S.D. follows an elaborate criteria prescribed by its Board of Administration, which takes into account a multiplicity of factors, e.g., consumer preference, product/brand performance in the civil market, the number of years for which the product has been selling in the civil market, the infrastructure for after-sales service provided by the manufacturer, the price of the product and the extent to which a production already stands covered in the C.S.D. range.

Any organisation, including voluntary social organisations and womens co-operative societies, which satisfies the laid down criteria, is free to supply its product(s) to the Canteen Stores Department. Other things being equal, products of voluntary social organisations, Co-operative Societies, and Ex-Servicemen's enterprises etc. are given positive consideration. All organisations intending to supply products to the C.S.D. have to be registered with it. Application forms, for purposes of registration, can be obtained from the General Manager, C.S.D., Bombay. Aplications are screened by a Committee of C.S.D. officers, specially constituted for the pupose, and considered for acceptance of rejection by the Board of Administration of the C.S.D.

Country's Current Defence Expenditure

3047. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the country's current defence expenditure is 3.8 percent of GNP, if so, the comparative figures of the percentage in neighbouring countries;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the ratio of population and army jawans is the lowest in the country as compared to other neighbouring countries, if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is also a fact that there is a constant threat to the security of the country; and

(d) if so, what steps Government have taken or propose to take to meet the threat?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b): According to the Quick Estimates of GNP (which are available upto the year 1990-91) India's Defence expenditure for 1990-91 constituted approximately 3% of GNP. As compared to the expenditure incurred by India, that of China and Pakistan, according to the published literature, is higher, that of Pakistan being 7% of GNP for the year 1991. Published literature also indicates that India's ratio of Army jawans to the overall population is lower than that of both Pakistan and China.

(c) and (d): The Government constantly monitor the country's security environment and take all appropriate measures to effectively counter any threat to the nation's security.